



# Hazard Mitigation Programs

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Emergency Management Division  
Washington Military Department

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## Background

There are three programs that provide funding to eligible communities around the state to address issues surrounding reducing the impacts of major natural disaster events. These programs are:

The **Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP)** which authorized by Section 404 of Public Law 93-288, as amended, the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act. The HMGP is available only following a presidential declaration of a major disaster, the state of Washington may be eligible to receive funds to eliminate or significantly reduce the impacts of disasters.

The **Flood Mitigation Assistance (FMA)** program, authorized by P.L. 103-325, Title V National Flood Insurance Reform, the Riegle Community Development Act, which provides annual funding specifically designed to address flood related mitigation issues and focuses on repetitive flood loss insured structures.

The **Pre-Disaster Mitigation competitive (PDMc)** is authorized by the Section 322 of the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA2K) and provides "annual" funding on a nationally-competitive basis to eligible states and communities.

## Purpose

All programs are designed to fund projects and plans that will reduce the effects of hazards and/or vulnerability to future disaster damage. The HMGP and PDMc can, within the limits of state and federal guidelines, help fund a wide range of new projects that reduce hazard vulnerability and the potential of damage and to develop natural hazard mitigation plans that meet the criteria of 44 CFR 201.6, the FMA can address only flood related projects and plans.

## Eligible Applicants\*

State Government	Certain Nonprofit Organizations with
Local Governments	Like-Government Services & Facilities
Special Districts	Indian Tribes

\*Individuals cannot apply directly for the program funds; an eligible applicant must sponsor the project. For the PDMc – private non-profits are not eligible and must have an eligible community sponsor.

## Funding Constraints

The total amount for the mitigation funding is normally very limited. For PDMc the national authorization is normally \$150 million (nation-wide), the state receives approximately \$200,000 a year in federal FMA funds and the post-disaster requests for HMGP funds have historically exceeded the available funding by a ratio of 10 to 1. For the HMGP, the current law as it applies to the state of Washington, FEMA may contribute a minimum of 20 percent of the amount that it will spend under the disaster assistance programs. In order to select projects for funding, all proposals are evaluated and scored against state and federal program criteria. Some of the

general criteria are listed below. Funding for the HMGP grants normally will be 75% - Federal and 25% - Non Federal (applicant and State split for HMGP only). The state does not contribute a portion of the non-federal share for PDMc and FMA and the applicant is responsible for the full cost share. The grants from all three programs will be made available to eligible applicants on a **competitive** basis.

## **Grant Process**

- For the HMGP – the State conducts applicant briefings in impacted communities following disaster declaration. For PDMc and FMA the process begins with the publishing of the “Notice of Funding Availability” (NOFA) in the federal register by FEMA.
- “Letters of Intent” (LOI) are submitted by eligible applicants.
- Following review of LOIs, HMGP applications are mailed to eligible applicants. Actual deadlines for return of applications vary by disaster.
- For HMGP and FMA the applications are reviewed for eligibility and site visits conducted as required. Applications are then evaluated and scored by a work group of state and local representatives. Local representatives are from outside the declared disaster area(s). This process was developed with local input and assistance. Projects are then recommended to FEMA for approval and funding based upon score and available funds.
- For PDMc – applications are received by the state and reviewed to ensure that they are in-compliance with the state mitigation plan, that they are eligible projects, and complete applications. Eligible applications that meet the criteria in the state plan are submitted to the FEMA Regional Office for review and submittal to the National Review team.
- Upon notification of approval and funding, a grant agreement between the state and applicant is developed.
- Depending upon the size and complexity of the project, final approval for funding by FEMA may take between 6 and 12 months.

## **Types of Eligible Projects**

Following are just a few examples of projects the mitigation grant programs can be used to fund:

- Structural hazard control, such as debris basins;
- Retrofitting, such as flood proofing to protect structures from future damage and seismic retrofits of critical facilities;
- Acquisition, elevation, and relocation of structures from hazard-prone areas;
- Construction activities that will result in protection from hazards;
- Development of local natural hazard mitigation plans that meet the criteria of 44 CFR § 201.6

All applications are evaluated against a set of eligibility criteria as established in 44 CFR Sec. 206.434 and the state Hazard Mitigation (322) Plan. Historically, some of the eligibility challenges have been:

- Problems complying with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), to include public involvement in the development and selection of the alternative solutions.
- Lack of documented support of the local community and permitting agencies.
- Have not been determined to be the most practical, effective, and

environmentally sound alternative among the possible options.

- Applicant has not shown that they have sufficient fiscal resources (local match) to initiate and complete the project.
- Project did not demonstrate a sufficient Cost-to-Benefit ratio by showing that the solution addresses a problem that is repetitive, or that poses a significant risk if left unsolved, and will not cost more than the benefit provided.
- Applicant is not, or located in a community that is, participating and in good standing with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).
- Project did not provide a long-term solution (25+ years).
- Project does not demonstrate that it will substantially reduce the risk of future damage, hardship, loss, or suffering from a major disaster.
- Project eligible for other federal funding. Mitigation grant funds cannot be used to duplicate any other federal programs (Federal Highways, Corps of Engineers, etc). Federal funds from one program cannot be used as a match for other federal funds.
- Project did not demonstrate that it has manageable, future maintenance requirements.
- Does not solve a problem independently, without being dependent on other mitigation measures, such as structural flood control measures.
- Community does not have an approved Local Hazard Mitigation (322) Plan.

Projects that do not meet the above eligibility criteria cannot be scored or evaluated.

## **Contact**

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